It’s great to have the 5-year review now in our rear-view window and start thinking and planning for the next 5 years. The External and National Review panel had some great compliments about WARC which were a pleasure to receive as well as some constructive comments about how to think strategically and how to guide growth into the future. With these as well as our 5-year renewal finalised the team have commenced planning for our biennial Strategy retreat for March 2024. The retreat will give WARC Centre academic and professional teams an opportunity to plan the next big ideas and the strategies to operationalise these well. We are also planning several new initiatives in 2024. This includes updates and expansion of our popular “Research Matters” meetings. This will include inviting a wider audience to Research Matters and particularly inviting Health District and Community Health members to give greater opportunities to collaborate and work with WARC. This will also include an increase in invitations to external speakers, of which we already have some confirmed. Early 2024 will also see the implementation of the ClickUp project software to increase project management effectiveness and efficiency. The team have already spent substantial time in planning how to increase efficiency, inter-project communication and maintain high quality project delivery. With the growing size of WARC, we will also be updating our Governance structure with introduction of an “Executive Management” group.

The quarter has again seen some exciting events and achievements – with a great representation at both the international European Society of Cardiology Meeting and the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand Meeting – bringing back a host of prizes that you can see in later pages of the report. We also have had several new members this quarter, and we welcome: Rahul Sathiaraj, Shive Narang and welcome back Harry Klimis.

Best wishes Clara Chow AM | Professor of Medicine and Academic Director
Welcome to new team members
- Rahul Sathiaraj – Digital Health Project Manager
- Shiva Narang – Clinical Trials Coordinator

And welcome back Senior Lecturer, Dr Harry Klimis.

5 Year Review
In Q3 we participated in the Faculty of Medicines and Health's Review for all Research Centres. This was a great opportunity to reflect on our successes and many many achievements and look ahead to the next five years!

We received positive feedback and will continue to be forward thinkers tackling the toughest health challenges.

With thanks to WARC's Centre Manager Dr Marina Ali for her tireless efforts to support the continued success of WARC.
WARC AT A GLANCE
Overview of WARC activities to date, up to 30 Sept 2023

WARC ACTIVITIES

175 Partners
119 Active Projects
85 Team members
80 WARC-led statistical analyses
58 Clinical Trials

PROJECTS STATUS

Stage 0 - Early Stage
Stage 1 - Protocol...
Stage 2 - Feasability
Stage 3 - Ethics Approval
Stage 4 - Governance
Stage 5 - Initiation
Stage 6 - Recruitment
Stage 7 - Data Collection...
Stage 8 - Close out
Stage 9 - Study Follow up
Stage 10 - Data analysis
0 50

OUR RESEARCH THEMES

Digital Health & Technology
Equity in Healthcare Access
New Clinical Approaches
What a quarter for WARC to showcase our hard work on the international, national and local stage.

**ESC Amsterdam 2023**
The European Society of Cardiology held its annual scientific meeting, the largest international cardiology meeting and a chance for WARC researchers and students to present to the global stage and learn from leaders in cardiovascular health research.

**CSANZ Adelaide 2023**
WARC was well represented at the Cardiac Society Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ) Annual Scientific Meeting. WARC broke records with number of nominations our team received for awards and prizes. WARC walked away with six awards

- **CSANZ Prize Winners**
  - Ashvin Bandodkhar (Medical Student/WARC) Heart Rhythm Prize Session Finalist
  - Dr Timothy Campbell (Scientist/WARC) Heart Rhythm Prize Session Winner and Cardiac Imaging Prize Session Finalist
  - Simone Marschner (PhD Candidate/Biostatistician/WARC) Clinical Trials Prize Session Finalist
  - Sonali Munot (PhD Candidate/Project Manager/WARC) Preventative Cardiology Prize Session Finalist
  - Dr Anna Ne (PhD Candidate/Concord & WARC) Heart Rhythm Prize Finalist
  - Samual Turnbull (Cardiac Physiologist/WARC) Allied Health, Science and Technology Prize Session Winner

Congratulations to everyone who was nominated and our winners!

**Westmead Health Precinct**
We had the opportunity to collaborate with our colleagues at Hospital Week 2023 (Westmead) and Westmead Research Innovation Conference 2023.

PhD Candidate and WARC’s Senior Biostatistician Simone Marschner presenting her poster at Hospital Week
OUR PERFORMANCE

PUBLICATIONS EXCELLENCE

PUBLICATION STATISTICS

40 Publications

24 High ranking (IF> 5)

15 International collaborations

FUNDING

Congratulations to our Dr Pierre Qian on some big funding success this quarter!

- McCusker Charitable Foundation Philanthropic Grant – Pierre Qian $250k
- FMH Rewarding Research Success – Pierre Qian $40k
- NHMRC Synergy Grant Funding (RMIT-led) - Pierre Qian $390k

Dr Pierre Qian

Dr Pierre Qian is a clinician scientist based at Westmead Applied Research Centre and Clinical Academic in the Western Sydney Local Health District specialising in treatment of heart rhythm disorders using minimally invasive catheter ablation. He leads a translational biomedical engineering team Westmead Hospital innovating and developing novel cardiac ablation technology and techniques to advance the treatment of heart rhythm disorders and high blood pressure.

WARC continues to produce high impact quality publications. In Q3 WARC led or contributed to 40 publications across all our research themes.

More than half of these were in top-ranking global journals (I>5) and 15 of papers were co-authored with international researchers.

Congratulations to all our researchers who continue to deliver exceptional research.
OUR PERFORMANCE

**Ignite 2023**
Dr Liliana Laranjo and Dr Huong Ly Tong were (mini)keynote speakers at Ignite 2023 Physiotherapy Conference

**MedConnect at UNSW**
Professor Clara Chow had an opportunity to talk about improvements in medical specialist training for women and the remaining barriers for them at the MedConnect at UNSW event.

OUTREACH
Great when our impact is recognised, especially within our Westmead Health Precinct and the University - amongst such a high calibre of work and inspirational leaders.

WARC’s Academic Director and PI Pablo Fernandez presenting at 2023 Westmead Research and Innovation Conference
OUR PERFORMANCE

TEXTCARE UPDATE

TEXTCARE continues to develop and grow. TEXTCARE is a vehicle for behaviour change using text messages. This quarter we saw:

- It has a consistent track record in retention of participants and engagement, with very good patient feedback.

The platform now supports research groups and real-world applications across a variety of health disciplines. These include:
- Heart Health
- Community Health
- Mental Health
- Diabetes
- COVID
- Women Health
- Pain Management
- Dental Hygiene
- Rehabilitation
- Medication Management
- Patient Monitoring
OUR PERFORMANCE

CLINICAL TRIALS

This quarter has been busy with several studies receiving ethics and governance approval and the 45&Up Mobile Health Study commencing recruitment!

CVD & OHE Study (CardioVascular Disease & Oral Health Education)
- Human Ethics Approval
- Recruited 1st participant

45 & Up Mobile Health Study
- Commence Recruitment

The international PROTECT-ICD Trial has hit the halfway mark and other clinical trials are well underway with recruitment.

SMILESup Trial (Supporting Mobile Intervention Lifestyle Evaluating Scale Up)
- Commence Recruitment (7 pts)

ARG Trial (Aortic Renal Ganglia) to induce arrhythmias
- Commence Recruitment (2 pts)

RELEVENT Trial (REsolution of Left VENTricular thrombus)
- Commence Recruitment (2 pts)

PROTECT-ICD Trial
- Completes half recruitment (570 pts)

RAPID Study (Safety efficacy study on Automated External Defibrillation)
- Recruitment Target Complete (7 pts)

CLINICAL TRIAL – FOCAL THEME

DIGITAL HEALTH

Three Digital Health projects have received approval from Human Research Ethics Commitment:
- CHAT-AF-S (Conversational HeAlth supporT in Atrial Fibrillation Self-Management)
- PARTICIPATE (PArtnering RemoTe monitoring of Implanted Cardiac devices with Intelligent PATient Engagement)
- WOBELS (Wearables for Blood Pressure lowering in Elderly People)

MICArdic recruitment

Using social media to support clinical trial recruitment has been an exciting initiative for the MICArdic trial. Since advertising on Facebook, LinkedIn and X the project has received 181 expressions of interest and 29 randomised patients – a great outcome for the Team.
Ms Wendy Liu works as a Research Assistant at WARC and has a background in physiotherapy. Wendy is currently pursuing a Master of Biostatistics. Her professional journey has been driven by a passion for empowering individuals to actively manage chronic conditions, particularly through the exciting realm of digital health.

Dr Edel O’Hagan is an early career researcher at Westmead Applied Research Centre and a registered Physiotherapist. Her PhD focused on delivering patient education to promote self-management of back pain. She applies the knowledge gained to support the care of other chronic conditions such as hypertension.

Ms Wendy Liu works as a Research Assistant at WARC and has a background in physiotherapy. Wendy is currently pursuing a Master of Biostatistics. Her professional journey has been driven by a passion for empowering individuals to actively manage chronic conditions, particularly through the exciting realm of digital health.

FEATURED TEAM
Dr Edel O’Hagan – WARC EMCR
Wendy Liu – WARC RA

MICArdiac is a multi-centre randomised controlled trial which aims to investigate the effect of a mobile health program optimised with artificial intelligence on Systolic Blood Pressure and other cardiovascular risk factors in adults with high blood pressure.

Dr Edel O’Hagan has been involved in the design of the intervention and all procedural aspects of the trial.

Bystander response makes a significant difference to survival in out-of-hospital cardiac arrests. Yet, a significant proportion of the general public are not trained in basic life support skills and are not prepared to respond.

Sonali has recently completed her doctoral studies in public health that focussed on ‘understanding barriers in the community to learning and responding to cardiac arrest—with a focus on NSW multiethnic communities’. She was supervised by Professors Clara Chow and Julie Redfern.

The FirstCPR cluster randomised trial implemented as part of her studies is a community-based intervention aimed at increasing layperson training and willingness to respond to a cardiac arrest emergency. The study also enabled an in-depth examination of attitudes to response among some of the dominant migrant groups in our community. Process evaluation of FirstCPR has provided valuable insight into the implementation of community-based interventions and factors related to participant reach and engagement.

Sonali is passionate about implementation research and keen to continue contributing towards preventive medicine and public health initiatives that lead to community empowerment and better health outcomes.

FEATURED STUDENT
Dr Edel O’Hagan – WARC EMCR
Dr Sonali Munot – WARC EMCR
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APPENDIX 1 - PUBLICATIONS


Connect with us

linkedin.com/warc-westmead-applied-research-centre

@WARC-USYD

sydney.edu.au/westmead-applied-research-centre